

# The Vexations of a Shut-In Vampire Princess

## Spoiler-Filled Review



*The Vexations of a Shut-In Vampire Princess*, also known as *Hikikomari Kyūketsu Hime no Monmon*, is an adventure fantasy anime. It's based on a Japanese light novel series written by Kotei Kobayashi and illustrated by Riichu. Currently, ten volumes of the light novel have been published, along with two manga volumes. As a warning, there will be discussion of sexual assault, sexual harassment, blood, death, murder, bullying, abusive relationships, and other mature themes.

This series has a relatively simple plot: a vampire hermit named Terakomari Gandesblood (voiced by Tomori Kusunoki), or Komari for short, awakens to learn that she is commander of an army, as arranged by her father. However, she leads a notoriously insubordinate group, and the fact she hates blood has put her in a bad position. Her trusted maid, Villhaze (voiced by Sayumi Suzushiro), helps ensure that she can be successful, despite her obstacles.

*The Vexations of a Shut-In Vampire Princess* has an intriguing conflict, but in this series conceives of sexual harassment as the [only way](#) a queer person can touch the protagonist. Manga reviewers disliked this very point. They criticized Villhaze for engaging in situations bordering on sexual harassment and said consent is ignored. This differs from [I'm In Love with the Villainess](#). Some describe Rae Taylor, protagonist of that series, as [a "creepy stalker"](#). She has a reason for actions which

cross Claire Francois's personal boundaries: in the past, her love for women has never been reciprocated. She believes this will be the case for Claire. Villhaze has no such reason when it comes to Komari.

Same-sex harassment [should not](#) portrayed as a joke. It is understandable that some people, including queer viewers, find the actions by Rae toward Claire in *I'm in Love with a Villainess* (ILTV) and Villhaze toward Komari, in this series, uncomfortable. Rae and Villhaze want their "targets" to be vexatious. Rae doesn't believe her feelings will be reciprocated. She ends up restraining (limiting) herself as time goes on, only wanting to be by Claire's side. You could say that ILTV dismantles/counters the trope among lesbian women sexually harassing other women. In contrast, Villhaze harasses Komari relentlessly. The series is a "[very trashy brand](#) of yuri fanservice."

Although *Vexations of a Shut-In Vampire Princess* has problematic nonconsensual actions, primarily by Villhaze against Komari, like forced kisses, it doesn't have sexual assault, a toxic relationship, incest, and the like, present in the twelve-episode anime adaptation of *Citrus*. It aired at the same time as a cute, sweet, and fun sci-fi yuri anime ([Stardust Telepath](#)), an action comedy ([Spy x Family](#)), an isekai ([I Shall Survive Using Potions!](#)), a fantasy (*Tearmoon Empire*), a romcom harem (*The 100 Girlfriends Who Really, Really, Really, Really, Really Love You*), and a drama/mystery/romance (*The Apothecary Diaries*). While those series are different from this one, and have their own issues, they are legions better than this one. The sexual harassment by a series protagonist (Villhaze) toward another protagonist (Komari) causes the series to rot from the inside.

Even so, Komari is a sympathetic character with a dark backstory. She became a shut-in after being bullied in high school. She lacks athletic and magical ability. It's stated she can't stand blood. As a result, she wants to be a peace-loving vampire. The Empress declares that Villhaze, of the Mulnite Imperial Army, will be Komari's maid. Later, Komari is put in charge of an army unit. Villhaze helps show Komari is "the strongest" so no one suspects she is weak. Komari is internally anxious. She fails to give a speech, tries to reassure everyone that no one will think of overthrowing her, and pushes away a reporter who gets too close. She does not want a war. Later, there's a puff piece about her in the local paper.

In *The Vexations of a Shut-In Vampire Princess*, each nation possesses a dark core, a ritual article which "produces boundless magic." In [this world](#), wars happen in the Dark Core area where powers of all the cores of the world are brought together. They are "entertainment wars." Komari realizes how absurd the whole thing is. However, due to her inflated personality in the media, others

want to unseat her. One woman even plans to kill her. Without a doubt, the theme of constructing your identity and deceiving people as to your true nature is interesting. This makes me think of the Forgers [in \*Spy x Family\*](#). They manufacture a story about themselves so that Operation Strix can succeed. Similarly, in this series, there is a reported classified document, as shown in the second episode, which tells of Komari's "atrocities," including a claimed massacre.

Unfortunately, these interesting plot points are offset by sexual harassment. The Third Pocket Edition of *Black's Law Dictionary* describes it as employment discrimination involving "verbal or sexual abuse of a sexual nature." It also lists hostile-environment sexual harassment and quid pro quo sexual harassment as two types of sexual harassment. Sexual assault is defined as "offensive sexual contact with another person," apart from rape. The Empress makes Komari a Crimson Lord without her consent by kissing her while she is sleeping. This disturbing action follows the Empress teasing Komari, saying she will massage her boobs. Villhaze sleeps naked near Komari (since she [deeply loves her](#)). She also bleeds out her nose after Komari agrees to do anything she wants. This follows Villhaze threatening to release Komari's story to the entire Imperial Court.

I'm not sure I would call *The Vexations of a Shut-In Vampire Princess* "[fun](#)." It is more dramatic than anything else, especially as [new characters](#) are added every episode. Villhaze and Komari have a strange relationship, with Komari often pushing her away and even calling her the "creep of the century." Having the show's queer elements revolving around older women [forcing attention on or humiliating Komari](#), who has to bluff her way through commanding an army unit, is problematic. Villhaze is perverted and obsessed with Komari. The series makes that clear. We can accept that her love is genuine. This love is not the same as Rae's problematic behavior (as noted earlier). [Villhaze acts like a creep](#) in a joking manner, making strange comedy out of a very violent series. This mixes with weird and creepy fan service shots.



(watch on: [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YRDSausZ4\\_g](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YRDSausZ4_g))

Having blood-filled anime is not unique. Unlike [some other reviewers](#), I'm not sure I fully approve of the series being very violent. I understand that wars are shown as pointless. However, impertinent violence nor death should be shown as a gag. Such violence includes fights against the assassin in the [second episode](#) and a staged fight between Komari and Lt. Helder in the same episode. Villhaze ensures Komari will win.

It's jarring to have the bully, an aristocrat named Millicent Blueknight (voiced by Sora Amamiya), return in the third episode. She tortures and kidnaps Villhaze so Komari will fight her. Millicent engages in elements of terrorism: she uses violence to intimidate and cause panic. She doesn't care about impacting Komari's [political conduct](#). Her action isn't [for political purposes](#). She wants Komari terrified. When Komari calls her a "terrorist," she's correct in the sense that Millicent is part of a terrorist organization with political goals: Inverse Moon.

In this series, she fears Millicent, as she says Millicent tormented her. Millicent called her indecisive, scum, and crybaby. At the time, she told them to stop bullying Villhaze, and stood up for her. She remembers this while reading Villhaze's love letter. Interestingly, even Millicent's accomplice thinks she is out of her mind. Of course, she won't have this and she ends up stabbing him for his opposition. I am reminded [of \*The Executioner and Her Way of Life\*](#). That series, an adventure, isekai,

and yuri [did not involve](#) sexual harassment, as far as I remember. But, it has bullying, murder, memory loss, suicide, wanton violence, and kidnapping.

*The Vexations of a Shut-In Vampire Princess* encourages the audience to sympathize with Millicent. In the [fourth episode](#), the audience learns how she became a bully. She had brutal training, an abusive father, and a teacher who told her to use whatever method to kill certain people. Komari caused her to die (with her core explosion) and her memory to break. Still, she bullied people and joined a terrorist organization named Inverse Moon. Komari describes her a “lost soul.” Millicent doesn’t accept this. She calls her “genuine trash,” and stabs her, causing her to lose blood. Her secret is revealed. She takes in Villhaze’s blood and her magic abilities increase. As a result, she wins the battle, cutting off Millicent’s arms, and declares she will have mercy on her (this time). Her army corps observes the battle and is over-joyous at this victory.

The next morning she wakes up and doesn’t remember going into [a super-saiyan-like form](#). A flashback shows that Komari had a taste of blood at age three and ended up killing everyone. As a defensive measure, she was hypnotized to hate blood. As such, she doesn’t remember her Core Implosion. This reveals is that Komari is, in actuality, very powerful. She can ingest blood. However, due to hypnosis, she believes she is weak. This means that her weakness is constructed and isn’t real!

There are some fun moments of *The Vexations of a Shut-In Vampire Princess*. Komari, in the second episode, fights back against one of her officers in a rap battle. It reminded me of a scene [in D4DJ](#) in which Rinku and Mini argue about their feelings for one each other (and what they mean to one another). There’s also characters such as a wolf-faced Bellius, Coastel Conoto, and a beast named Bucephalus (which Komari rides like a horse). Often they are willing to sacrifice their lives for her. There’s “fugly” T-shirts with Komari’s face too.

Such moments are contrasted with Villhaze saying she has no shame as she dresses scantily. Komari remains annoyed that Villhaze sexually harasses her constantly. She later calls her a “perverted maid.” Later, Komari tells Villhaze to stay by [her side](#) forever. [Villhaze blushes](#), falsely believing it is a proposal. Of course, there’s competition. “The Black Flash”, also known as Flote Mascarail (voiced by Riho Sugiyama), refuses to recognize her (and pushes for a vote of no confidence in her). She even kills all of Komari’s subordinates! Then there’s [Sakuna Memoir](#) (voiced by Manaka Iwami). She’s another Crimson Lord and acts like she is Komari’s friend. In reality, she works for Inverse Moon and is tasked with [killing her](#). All the while, the Crimson Lords, in general, are [under threat](#).

In the sixth episode, Flote proposes impeaching Komari. She wants to remove Komari from the Crimson Lords. She's impressed by her track record but objects because Komari never fights. Unsurprisingly, she bullies Komari, claiming she is not worthy and undeserving of the Crimson Lord status. Flote's effort is for naught. Villhaze kills one Crimson Lord (a deciding vote), meaning there isn't a majority for or against Komari. As a result, the Crimson Lords agree to have a war between them to "settle" the matter and make clear who is "strongest." Like Skearhead in *Soaring Sky Pretty Cure!*, these Crimson Lords think "strength is everything."

Komari is different. She detests war and wants to be a novelist. She becomes friends with Sakuna, who's impressed by Komari's novel. They decide to be allies. Sakuna says she is worried about the Crimson Lords' War. She has the power to sense psyche of other items. However, she's hiding something (but hints at it): she is working with Inverse Moon to kill Komari! She was forced into this situation because her family is held captive. She asks Millicent for help and says she wants to die to avoid all of it.

Although Sakuna is somewhat sympathetic, her character fulfills the deranged/perverted/obsessed lesbian stereotype. She has a whole room dedicated to Komari, which would make Villhaze jealous, and happily wears the weird/terrible Komari t-shirt. It's a toxic mix of violence, sexual harassment, and perversion. This weakens the entire series. Arguably, the only relatable character is Komari. She's stuck in a bad situation and has to defend her position from those trying to unseat her.

The seventh episode of *The Vexations of a Shut-In Vampire Princess* ups the stakes. The Crimson Lords' War begins. Villhaze saves Komari from being killed in a frontal attack. Sakuna targets Flote and uses her Core Implosion. The Queen realizes Sakuna is being manipulated by an Inverse Moon member. Villhaze deploys a poison which only kills men. Komari fights for her life against the others trying to capture, and murder, her. She "unintentionally" (through ingesting blood from Villhaze) causes an explosion which destroys the entire castle and everyone fighting around it. Flote confronts Komari, saying she won't let her do what she pleases, Sakuna kills Flote. Arguably, she deserves this fate. It is then that Sakuna reveals that she is the terrorist. She asks Komari to forgive her and moves Komari into her mindspace with the "Mind Refrain" spell.





(watch on: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DPOy0Ntne3g>)

The first part of the [next episode](#) is intriguing: Komari sees Sakuna's memory in a "memory planetarium", and sees how she once lived peacefully. This all changed when Inverse Moon blackmailed her. She became a pawn of the organization, with a task to manipulate memories of those she killed and father information about the Dark Core. She threatens to rearrange the memories of Komari to make her a big sister, to give her the family, she lost. While Komari is willing to take on this role, she refuses to die, or to have her memories rearranged. She says such an action is rude to your actual big sister and Sakuna cries. By this point, she has left the memoryscape and both have reconciled to an extent. The real villain appears.

As it turns out, Odilion wanted Sakuna to kill Komari. He beats her up for not doing what he wants. He even breaks Komari's arm. Sakuna uses a special drug to fight him, but the drug's side effects result in his temporary victory. The table turn after Komari has some of her blood, biting her in the neck in typical vampire style. This [superpowered form](#) is different from anything shown previously. She has the power to level all six nations! Sakuna is revived to the shock of Odilion. He refuses to apologize to her, as Komari asked, so she breaks his sword and arm. He gets what he deserves: his followers are mentally manipulated to mortally wound him. She strangles him and finishes him off.

Komari is declared the victor of the Crimson Lords' War. To the chagrin of Villhaze, Sakuna gets close to her, especially after the Queen pardons her. Sakuna is glad. Villhaze cries and blushes, likely because she is jealous. The remaining Inverse Moon members vow to support another unnamed Crimson Lord. They laughably say Komari isn't a problem. At this point in the series, I realized that Komari embodies the [honne / tatemae dichotomy](#). In Japan, honne means a person's true or authentic thoughts, desires, and opinions. Tatemae means behavior adopted in public, according to what is socially accepted (or not). Simply put, tatemae is a person's public facade. I can't think of any other parallels, apart from the egosyntonic and egodystonic [differentiation](#) in psychoanalysis, or the true self / false self psychological dualism [proposed](#) by psychoanalyst Donald Winnicott.

Despite the violence in *The Vexations of a Shut-In Vampire Princess*, no characters permanently die. As such, nothing in the series fulfills the "bury my gays" trope. Some creators, like ND Stevenson, have [eschewed](#) tragic gay romance involving death. Others have [noted](#) the large number of gay and bisexual characters who were killed off, for one reason [or another](#), with [rocky](#) representation. Often the trope, at its minimum, is problematic, but at its worst, [sends](#) a dangerous message.

The ninth episode marks the final series arc. It begins with Komari going on a vacation-of-sorts, for winning the Crimson Lords' War, with Villhaze and Sakuna. This isn't all [fun and games](#): it is part of a mission to find out what the Moonpeach Princess, also known as Neila Cunningham (voiced by Fairouz Ai) is up to. It appears that Neila's servant Gertrude (voiced by Rina Hidaka) is an airhead and a klutz, but later revelations prove this as only a facade. Komari engages in puffery to put herself on a pedestal. Neila admits she killed 50,000 people. Rightly, Komari points out that Neila is a serious criminal who should be arrested and charged. Neila invited them there for a reason: she wants her assistance with world domination.

In keeping with the fact that Komari is a wanna-be pacifist throughout *The Vexations of a Shut-In Vampire Princess*, she refuses to go along with this. She argues that she won't use her power recklessly. In her view, such power should only be used for world peace. Her reasonable statement is interrupted. Her troops accidentally wipe out Neila's most elite force, causing her to go on the attack. Like Sakuna, Inverse Moon threatened her, telling her to kill Komari. She's later chastised for not doing so. She vows to change Gerra-Aruka, the nearby country she is [a princess](#) of, and make Komari her servant so that she can turn the world upside down.

In this episode, one more character is revealed: Karla Amatsu. She's from a country known as Heavenly Paradise. She comes to Mulnite to form an alliance against Neila. Later, she shares



something with Komari: she doesn't like futile battles, sees combat as futile, and believes it is the height of barbarism. Komari's advisors force her to say Mulnite is bloodthirsty. She's ordered by the queen to kill Karla. Ultimately, Karla falsely believes that Komari is trying to kill her.

Such intimidation is successful. She agrees to an alliance. Heavenly Paradise vows to assist Mulnite in its battles. In this sense, I agree with the [well-stated review by Cryssoberyl](#) on *Okazu*, describing the series as a yuri battle harem. Four ladies have feelings for Komari (Villhaze, Sakuna, Neila, and arguably Millicent). There is a "lot to love in this show," although it is entertainment, rather than art.

On the other hand, these compelling plot points are weakened by sexually charged action. This includes Sakuna sucking Villhaze's blood in an erotic way and Komari almost kissing Karla after Villhaze pushes her. While these moments are cringeworthy, they pale in comparison to the ecchiesque *Gushing Over Magical Girls*. That is a series [described](#) as a magical girl parody about discovering your kinks, with "wall-to-wall explicit fanservice" full of a middle-schooler cast. Having Villhaze and Sakuna, at minimum, as love-obsessed lesbians, is not unique, as *Maria Holic* [has a similar](#) character. This series isn't necessarily, as explicit [as \*Valkyrie Drive\*](#), either.

The tenth episode of *The Vexations of a Shut-In Vampire Princess* provides background on Neila. [Komari's mother](#), Yulinne Grandesblood was her mentor! She told her to not make enemies without a reason. Neila wants to take down Komari and transform her country. Corrupt individuals taunt her. She further desires to expose [Madhart](#) (voiced by Kazuhiko Inoue), president of Gerra-Aruka, at whatever cost.



(watch on: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bRUvx6wVIOI>)

[This episode](#) raises the stakes. Karla agrees to an alliance with Mulnite, despite her reservations and belief that Komari is a warmonger. In reality, she is a pacifist. She was pushed into that situation. Karla says a pacifist puts in every effort towards avoiding war, but she needs to defeat Gerra-Aruka. One funny scene was when Komari wakes up, and her bed is on top of a meeting table, so she could attend a discussion on how to defeat the enemy. Things get heated. There's a failed enemy attack/assassination. Although they are badly outnumbered, they worry that ritual articles will be used, meaning someone can be killed without chance for revival.

The episode ends by Komari activating land mines Villhaze set. They blow up some of her own forces and the enemy. As soldiers try to kill her, Neila transports them away, leaving the other Crimson Lords behind to fight on her behalf. She reveals that Komari's mother was her mentor and that she met Komari five years earlier at a dinner party. At the time, Komari said she could take over the world without fighting and people would get along. Although she wanted to be Neila's friend, Neila was pulled away. Her parents told her she couldn't conspire with vampires. Many years past. She lost contact with Komari's mother and her kingdom had a coup d'état. Villhaze becomes infuriated, with jealousy, when Neila sneaks a kiss with Komari toward the end of the episode.

The last two episodes of *The Vexations of a Shut-In Vampire Princess* end the series with a bang. In the [11th episode](#), Neila and her maid talk to Komari, Villhaze, and Karla about their next steps. It is revealed that the rulers of Gerra-Aruka (also known as Daydream Paradise) are engaged in human experimentation. Even worse, their location is revealed. The enemy readies for an ambush. It turns out that the Neila's maid, Gertrude, is a traitor. She's working with the villainous Rainsworth (voiced by Nobuhiko Okamoto). He commands an elite unit. Komari refuses to give up. She lets Neila suck her blood, giving her a power-up, enhancing her power.

In the series finale, Rainsworth's elite Daydream Unit, composed of over 5,000 zombie soldiers, begin their attack. Two reporters film the terrible prison conditions below Gerra-Aruka, after Neila releases the prisoners, and broadcast it across the world. Their broadcast causes people to turn against the rulers, with calls for revolution within Gerra-Aruka. This focus highlights the media's power in changing the tide of war. However, this is not the episode's main focus. Instead, it is Neila punching Gertrude in the face and somewhat forgiving her (after Gertrude attempted to apologize and told Neila to forget she existed). She has bigger issues to worry about: beating Madhart.

This suicide mission is accompanied by Komari getting a power-up of her own. She reluctantly drinks Neila's blood, reawakening her core explosion. She is portaled back to Naure and revives her units. The other Crimson Lords appear. Millicent fights Rainsworth. He loses badly and Komari beats him to a bloody pulp. He reveals his reason for all of this: he wanted violent revenge on those who caused discrimination and other clans. Neila tells him that although he did his best in his own way, he directed his efforts in the wrong direction. Komari murders him, horrifying Madhart. He still thinks he can beat the Empress. She tells him they want world domination, with a world where people help each other, through blood.

Madhart has a pessimistic view of humanity. He believes that humans are selfish and only think of themselves. The Empress counters his view. She says Komari will guide "people's hearts in the correct direction" and that Komari is already changing people's hearts. She demands he surrender. He refuses. Komari and Neila engage in [a double-attack](#), combining both of their powers. They completely obliterate the enemy presidential palace. It is implied that Madhart was killed during the attack. He's later described as being pushed and enticed into an unwinnable war by Inverse Moon. It's another case of people being manipulated.

*The Vexations of a Shut-In Vampire Princess* ends with a new presidential election in Gerra-Aruka, a weakened Inverse Moon, and continued war games by the Mulnite Empire. Neila battles with

Komari only to raise her image for the upcoming presidential election. She still wants Komari to be her servant, saying they are comrades will strive for world peace. Villhaze becomes angry and jealous at Neila for drinking some of Komari's blood. Sakuna says she wants to kill Neila so no one in the world has tasted Komari's blood. Villhaze, Neila, and Sakuna [demand](#) things of Komari. She is [dumbfounded](#), unsure what to do. She tells herself she wants to be a shut-in again, showing the series has gone full circle.

This ending, which some on [Reddit](#) and [Twitter](#) called “yuri harem,” isn't surprising. I see a parallel between the goals of Rainsworth and the White Fang. In the case of the latter, depicted [in RWBY](#), it began as a peaceful organization aiming to [improve conditions for Faunus](#), an animal-like species. It changed to becoming more violent. *RWBY: Ice Queendom* focuses on the White Fang more, with Weiss Schnee noting her disdain for the group. In that franchise, Weiss's family is just as guilty for oppression, with the White Fang a “mirror” for the Schnee family. Some have [previously](#) said the White Fang subplot in *RWBY* is bad storytelling and [that it perpetrates](#) the misleading idea of a small group of violent radicals starting problems, in keeping with the media perception that such individuals start altercations.

I'm not sure whether Rainsworth's efforts can be seen as a “cautionary tale for what can happen to social justice groups/movements,” as [some claimed](#) about the White Fang in *RWBY*, or not. But, they are surely portrayed negatively in *The Vexations of a Shut-In Vampire Princess*. If the series had gone the route of *RWBY: Ice Queendom*, in showing how the Schnee family committed terrorism and crimes on the same scale, if not more, than the White Fang, it could have been stronger on this point. This is another flaw with the storytelling of this series, which mixes sexual harassment, perversion, murder, death, blood, gore, and violence in pot, and presents it to viewers.

Perhaps these storytelling issues shouldn't be as much of a surprise. Project No. 9, which produced this series, is known for *Love After World Domination*, *My Stepmom's Daughter Is My Ex*, *The Angel Next Door Spoils Me Rotten*, *And You Thought There Is Never a Girl Online?*, and *Angel's 3Piece!*. While some, like *Love After World Domination* [are praiseworthy](#), others have [incestish](#) themes, [romanticize](#) traditional gender roles, and [sexualize](#) female characters.



(watch on: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=u3dEQoEidg>)

Coincidentally, NBCUniversal Entertainment Japan, also known as NBCUEJ, a subsidiary of Comcast's NBCUniversal, is involved in producing this series. It's helped produce [over 140](#) other series (some before Dentsu sold 80.1% of the company's shares to NBCUniversal in 2008). This includes [Black Lagoon](#), *The Duke of Death and His Maid*, [Is the Order a Rabbit?](#), *Kannazuki no Miko*, *Lapis Re:Lights*, *Maria Watches Over Us*, *Kino's Journey*, *My Roommate Is a Cat*, [Madlax](#), *Shikimori's Not Just a Cutie*, and *Whisper Me a Love Song*. Of those series, *Kannazuki no Miko*, [Maria Watches Over Us](#), and *Whisper Me a Love Song* are directly yuri. *Märchen Mädchen* and *Lapis Re:Lights* have yuri subtext.

The interesting thing about NBCEUJ being involved in production of this series, is that there's much better storytelling, without the issues present in this series, in *Maria Watches Over Us*, *My Roommate Is a Cat*, *The Death of Duke and His Maid*, and *Is the Order a Rabbit?* No series is perfect. I admittedly enjoyed some themes in this series, including the true self / false self dichotomy, and the false (and manufactured) nature of war. However, this series has many glaring problems, as I've explained in this review. I hope to not come across series with similar issues this year. *The Vexations of a Shut-In Vampire Princess* is currently streaming on HIDIVE.



Animation	★★★★★
Voice Acting	★★★★★
Music	★★★★☆
Story	★★★★☆
4.3	
★★★★☆	

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